



Taking Care of a Baby

What you can do to reduce the risk of SIDS



Put the baby down to sleep on his or her back

One of the most important things you can do to help reduce the risk of SIDS is to place a baby on his/her back to sleep. Health care providers now recommend that babies be placed on their back to sleep. Keep in mind that:

- Babies that can turn from back to front on their own should not be forced to stay on their back.
- Babies should be placed in a variety of positions while awake.
- Babies with certain health problems may need to sleep on their stomach. Discuss this with the baby's parents.



Provide the baby with smokefree surroundings



- Provide a smokefree environment to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- SIDS is more common among those babies who are exposed to smoke from tobacco products.
- Smoke is not good for a baby. Babies exposed to smoke have more colds and other illnesses.

Use the correct bedding for the baby

- A baby should sleep on a firm mattress or other firm surface. Make sure there are no ledges or gaps into which the baby could fall.
- Do not place the baby to sleep on a waterbed, sheepskin, pillow, or any other soft materials.
- Do not use fluffy blankets or comforters under the baby. Remove pillows, stuffed toys, and bumper pads from the crib of young babies.



Do not overdress the baby

- Babies need to be kept warm, not hot. If the room temperature is right for you, it will be right for the baby. As a general rule, dress the baby with the same amount of clothing that you are wearing.

Keeping a baby healthy

- It is important for babies to have regular checkups and immunizations.
- Talk to the parents about this and a plan to follow if the baby gets sick.



At the present time, there is no known way to predict or prevent a SIDS death. However, recent research has shown that these infant care practices have significantly reduced the risk of SIDS.



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